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REVIEW OF BOOKS.

Ultra-Crepidarius; a Satire on William Gifford. By Leigh Hunt.

FOR reasons which it is obviously unnecessary to enumerate, no literary appreciation of *Ultra-Crepidarius* will be attempted in the following brief notice, which, with the exception of a few remarks on the circumstances which have produced it, will be confined to a little explanatory observation and illustrative remark.

However beneficial in light, airy, or incidental application, an elaborate expenditure of satire on a particular individual is possibly defensible on two grounds alone,—in absolute self-defence; and in a chastisement of the perpetrator of vices and follies which have become a public nuisance. Without advertence to fair and legitimate criticism, or to the usual hostile darts, which, whether hurled by Hectors or Priams, all who publish should expect to encounter, we are scarcely called upon to say, that in respect to the first of these motives, the plea of justification of the author of *Ultra-Crepidarius* is notorious. Giving the widest allowance to excursive remark in the discussion of merits, and an entirely open field to the *quiz* and the *squibbery* of the very large existing college of anonymous *Littlewits*,—unless malignant insinuation, envenomed slander, and knowingly false and rancorous imputation, be also provided for, our Satirist is amply vindicated. So much for the self-defence plea; and as to the more general one, will it be found wanting in the estimation of any regular reader of the Quarterly Review, who belongs not to the clan which that miserably insidious and canting vehicle is constructed exclusively to support? The leader of any venal and interested gang of stipendiaries may claim to fight in his vocation, and to conduct an attack upon the opinions which he is hired to oppose,—but what right has he to assail persons when disconnected from their opinions? Or, to speak without a figure, what is more iniquitous than a pretended literary review, which decides not in reference to a work, but to the party or political bias of the author of it?—on a poem, for instance: “Is he one of us?” “No.” “Then down with him.” Such is the critical principle of the Quarterly Review, which, however, is happily beginning to operate to its own overthrow, and which will scarcely survive the precarious existence of the wretched-tempered man under whose nominal management it has been disgracefully displayed,—the “cankered carle,” who may be fairly attacked by every man, not because, in resemblance of the valiant Ishmael, every man has been attacked by him,—that might

have been honest,—but because he has meanly laid in ambush for those only, whose heads and ears would fetch a price at the seraglio door; rejoice the viziers and eunuchs; and repay the despicable executioner in hard sequins for his brutal performances.

Mr. Hunt alluded in the third number of *THE LIBERAL* to the *jeu d'esprit* which has now made its appearance, as having been composed four years ago. That it has not appeared before he attributes to a deficiency in his duties as a good “hater;” and that it now sees the light, to motives quite as defensible. Having once resolved, he does not spare; as will be seen by the following quotation from the preface:—

“The person who crawled for his portrait in the following sketch, has no excuse for the malignity of his very mediocre pretensions and slavish success. He is no inexperienced youth; nor is he poor in his old age. He has grown grey, yet he has not grown wiser. He has endured sickness and melancholy, yet they have not made him humane. The young he has treated as if he had never wanted encouragement himself, nor found it. The delicate of health he has not spared, though his own hand shook that struck them. It is said I attacked him first. It is not true. He attacked a woman. He struck, in her latter days, at the *crutches* of poor Mary Robinson—a human being, who was twenty times as good as himself, and whose very lameness (that last melancholy contradiction to qualities of heart and person, which he might well envy) was owing to a spirit of active kindness which he never possessed. The blow was bound to make every manly cheek tingle; and I held up the little servile phenomenon in the “Feast of the Poets.” For this, *and for attacking powerful Princes instead of their discarded mistresses*, he has never forgiven me. My first notice of him was in his praise: to which, if I mistake not, I owe the importunate requests which Mr. Murray made me to write in the Quarterly Review. I was then a youth, and knew his writings only piecemeal. I did not write in the Quarterly Review; and I soon acquired knowledge enough to sound the shallow depths of the Editor. *Hinc illæ lachrymæ*. Hence the “misquoting” criticism on the Story of Rimini. Hence, and for no other cause, his unfeeling attack on Mr. Keats; for extraordinary genius was calculated merely to perplex him. Hence, in some measure, his unchristian hatred and misrepresentation of the christian temper of Mr. Shelley: for if ever faith and charity were separate, it was in the persons of these two men. Mr. Gifford’s faith delights in scorning charity, and extinguishing hope.”

The machinery and versification of *Ultra-Crepidarius* remind us in a small degree of “The Feast of the Poets.” Mercury, rising one morning, misses one of his winged shoes, which Venus, with whom he was at that time domesticated (*à bonnes fortunes*) had dispatched to Ashburton, to bespeak a similar pair for herself. Not returning, the God and Goddess agree to go in search of it, and scarcely alight before they stumble on a *Shoe*, which behaves with the greatest disrespect to everything light, airy, beautiful, or winged; until, exasperated, Mercury *translates* him into the good-natured Aristarchus of the Quarterly. The following passage will convey a fair notion of the spirit and versification:—

“As soon as I finish my words, thou shalt be,
Not a man, for thou canst not, but human to see:
Thy appearance at least shall be taken for human,
However perplexing to painter or woman.
In ev’ry thing else, thou shalt be as thou art,
A thing made for dirty ways, hollow at heart.
Serve an Earl, as thou say’st; and, in playing the shoe,
Let the stories told of thee, malicious or true,
Only lead thee hereafter to scandalize too.
But let not an Earl stop thy progress; go higher,
And at every new step show addition of mire,
Like one, who, in climbing a loose-moulded hill,
Finds his foot growing heavier and dirtier still,

Strain after all those, who ascend to the crown ;
 But all who are falling, assist to kick down :
 Then getting at top, gape with sycophant joy,
 And poking about for becoming employ,
 Make signs thou art ready, with pliable span,
 To clasp any foot, that would trample on man.
 But despair of those nobler ascents, which thou'lt see
 Stretching far overhead with the Delphian tree,—
 Holy ground, to climb up to whose least laurell'd shelf
 Thou would'st have to change natures, and put off thyself.
 Stop, and strain at the base ; yet, to ease thy despair,
 Do thy best to obstruct all the feet that come there,
 Especially younger ones, winged like mine,
 Till bright, up above thee, they soar and they shine.
 Should even the graves, such as lie near the spot,
 Of critics and note-makers, help thee a jot,
 Be sure to pretend that the heap's of no use,
 And repay those who gave thee a lift with abuse.*
 Dig into their errors, their merits conceal,
 And then shudder to think that the dead can not feel.
 All things, in short, petty and fit, say and do,
 Becoming a man with the soul of a shoe.
 Boast thy origin once, because good common-place
 Has pronounc'd such behaviour a merit and grace ;
 But after that once, be consistent, and show
 A great horror of lowness, because it is low.
 Pick out for thy path, through the region of letters,
 The very worst tracks that dishonour'd thy betters ;
 Like boys, who to get a sensation and splutter,
 Prefer, to the pavement, a kick through the gutter ;
 Thus, edit no authors but such as unite
 With their talents a good deal of dirt or of spite ;
 Ben Jonson, because he was beastly and bluff ;
 And Massinger,—mince through his loathsomer stuff ;
 And Persius,—‘ let him be writ down’ Imitated,
 And say to poor Juvenal, ‘ Thou art translated.’
 These Latins will help too thy fondest of *penchants*,
 And swell thy large hate with the hates of the ancients.
 But as for such writers as Shakespear and others,—
 Low fellows, who treated all men as their brothers,
 Base panders, whose heads ran on love and a wood,
 Blasphemers, who thought the great Jupiter good,
 Who had right to be naked, and yet not asham'd,—
 Be sure to inform us, that they may be damn'd.
 I hear some one say, ‘ Murrain take him, the ape !’
 And so Murrain shall, in a bookseller's shape ;
 An evil-eyed elf, in a down-looking flurry,
 Who'd fain be a coxcomb, and calls himself Murray.
 Adorn thou his door, like the sign of the Shoe,
 For court-understrappers to congregate to ;
 For Southey to come in his dearth of invention,
 And eat his own words for mock-praise and a pension ;
 For Croker to lurk with his spider-like limb in,
 And stock his lean bag with way-laying the women ;
 And Jove only knows for what creatures beside
 To shelter their envy and dust-licking pride,

* “ Mr. Gifford is particularly furious and triumphant at the mistakes or little wit of his predecessors in annotation. He is angry that a pioneer is not a general ; forgetting that he himself, at his best, is but one of the company. His own mistakes in criticism, if not in the commoner tasks of annotation, are numerous, and betray a feebleness of observation and sentiment, always compelled to stop short of any thing deep or elevated. His footing is only fit for beaten paths ; and his eye cannot discern the best things that adorn even those. Sir Andrew can as soon give an ‘ exquisite reason.’ ”

And feed on corruption, like bats, who at nights
 In the dark take their shuffles, which they call their flights.
 Be these the Court-critics, and vamp a Review ;
 And by a poor figure, and therefore a true,
 For it suits with thy nature, both shoe-like and slaughterly,
 Be it's hue leathern, and title the *Quarterly*.
 Much misconduct it ; and see that the others
 Misdeem, and misconstrue, like miscreant brothers ;
 Misquote, and misplace, and mislead, and misstate,
 Misapply, misinterpret, misreckon, misdate,
 Misinform, misconjecture, misargue ; in short,
 Miss all that is good, that ye miss not the Court.
 Count the worth of a mind, not from what it produces,
 But what it will take to fall in with abuses.
 Is any one ardent, sincere, independent ?
 What distancing virtue ! Pray try make an end on't.
 Does any discover what you never could ?
 Pretend it's a trifle no gentleman would.
 Does a true taste appear for the authors you edit ?
 Take pains, by your scorn, to show you never had it.
 In short, be the true Representative Tool
 Of a whole ' Court of Coblers' got up into rule."

Subsequently the Poet, invoking Pope, imagines an *Avatar* of the heroes of the *Dunciad*. We select a few specimens of the bodies which they chuse to inform :—

Happy Page shall be Best, well aware of his fury,
 Concanen be Croker, and Lintot be Murray :
 In Southey poor Blackmore, beginning to doat,
 Shall not only turn a new stave, but his coat :
 The Wards and the Welsteds shall pamper their spleens,
 And club in Scotch papers and Scotch Magazines :
 And finally, thou, my old soul of the tritical,
 Noting, translating, high slavish, hot critical,
 Quarterly-scutcheon'd, great heir to each dunce,
 Be Tibbald, Cook, Arnall, and Dennis at once.*

* * * * *
 When the great and their flourishing vices are mention'd,
 Say people "impute 'em," and show thou art pension'd ;
 But meet with a Prince's old mistress *discarded*,
 And *then* let the world see "how *vice* is rewarded."

The virtuous indignation against *discarded* mistresses (the Sultanas *regnant* are uniformly sacred personages with moralists of this school) we presume, was acquired in the family of the deceased Earl Grosvenor, which, as our readers are aware, was almost proverbial for purity, in respect to the intercourse of the sexes.

To conclude, the person attacked cannot reasonably complain of this dose of bitter aloes from the hand which presents it. Most likely he will not take any open notice of it. Why should he, when he can spit vipers in return, at least once a quarter ; or, more characteristically still, — *anguis in herba*, — await *sweltering* amidst the rank literary vegetation of his review, until his natural venom can be ejected with equal safety and malignity.

* " Tibbald, an ostentatious annotator ; Cook, a poor translator ; Arnall, a government hireling ; and Dennis, the famous Dennis, the most irritable and envious critic of this nation, till his soul entered the unhappy little body before us."

The Fall of Constantinople, a Poem, with a Preface animadverting in detail on the unprecedented conduct of the Royal Society of Literature. By Jacob Jones, Jun. of the Inner Temple, &c.

ALL the world is aware of the formation of the Royal Society of Literature, and nobody on earth acquainted with anything which it has done, besides holding out inducements which it has not fulfilled, and thereby seducing harmless people into gratuitous rhyming, and a temporary sojourn in the Paradise of Fools. An equally ingenuous and irascible innocent of this description is Mr. Jacob Jones, Jun. whose detail of injuries—he will pardon us—made us laugh “sans intermission,” if not “quite an hour by the dial.” Not but that Mr. Jones has reason to complain, or that the Royal Society of Literature is not a very silly affair, but there is something so immensely ludicrous in a grave Society baiting with moonshine and catching poetical gudgeons by the score, it is impossible to resist the humour of it. The outline of this lamentable history is as follows:—

With a profundity as to results which belongs to a body of *Literati* composed chiefly of grave and learned personages, who become members *ex-officio*—lawyers, judges, politicians, and what not,—it is discovered that a premium of a hundred guineas will produce an excellent dissertation on the Age of Homer; one of fifty guineas, an essay on the history of the Greek Language; and another of fifty guineas, a poem on the Fall of Constantinople. Unfortunate temptations these to Mr. Jacob Jones, Jun.—for, yielding to two out of the three, with an equal portion of perseverance and simplicity, he boxes himself up for five months to the production of an Essay on Homer, and a poem on the Fall of Constantinople—and behold the reward! The Society first *postpone* giving the prizes to the productions furnished, and after inviting the unlucky candidates to revise and amend, decline giving them altogether. Peruse, gentle reader, the following intimation, and imagine the indignation of Mr. Jacob Jones, Jun. and such of his fellow sufferers as sought a similar explanation:—

“SIR,—I am directed to inform you that the Council of the Royal Society of Literature are of opinion, that *much* INDUSTRY and ABILITY have been shewn in *some* of the Essays presented for competition, but that they do not think any one of them *fully* deserving the Premium proposed. I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient, humble servant,

“RICHARD CATTERMOLLE, Sec.

“4, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, July 22d, 1823.”

As poetic expectant, Mr. Jones received an intimation in the very same words, except for “industry,” read “ingenuity,” and for “Essays,” “Poems.” It is impossible to be more pleasantly official.

We are by no means certain that Mr. Jacob Jones is a Cambrian Celt, but we strongly suspect it, for he has not only published this book—a common piece of resentment on the part of the *genus irritabile*—but has gravely applied to a counsel for advice, as to the ground of action for a breach of agreement, and obtains the following satisfactory explanation:—

“Such is the state of the English Law, that there are many rights without remedies—now as this agreement was a *nudum pactum*, the violation of it is not an actionable fraud. In equity and natural justice, however, the action is a swindling transaction.”

That is to say, the Society, having promised prizes to the best productions offered, good or bad, ought to have distributed them in strict conformity to such promise, whatever their intrinsic merit. We agree with Mr. Jones and his counsel learned in the law, and recommend a bill in Chancery forthwith.

So much for the wrong on general grounds. In looking to the poem here given, as that supplied by our angry and unfortunate bard, without being either absurd or discreditable to his scholarship, it is precisely one of those smooth mediocre productions that premiums are calculated to engender, and which, if they are not worthy the premium, are certainly not worth anything else. Academical prizes may now and then usefully elicit a poetical genius, although we exceedingly doubt it; but as a broad and general inducement to general national intellect, they are absurd, for no candidate of acknowledged or of conscious great powers, will put on harness and stoop to contend for them. We fully believe that the Royal Society of Literature met with no contribution, the publication of which could do it honour; but anything but a Royal Society of Literature would have foreseen such an issue. A promise, however, having been made, it should have been kept. "The Fall of Constantinople," by Mr. Jacob Jones, as a prize poem, would not have exalted their foresight to the skies, but it would at least have preserved their honour.

The pertinacious irascibility of Mr. Jacob Jones, Jun. has produced a publication which will instruct in more ways than the author intended. Everybody was convinced, in the first instance, that a Royal Society of Literature would, from the very nature of things, become a species of party patronage, and, by negating the independence, necessarily promote the subserviency of genius. We quote the following passage from the letter transmitted by Mr. Jacob Jones, with his Essay on Homer:—

"The peroration, for composing which, I had only two hours to spare, might be much enlarged and improved; and a dedication to his Majesty might give scope for a short piece of writing, which should be vigorous and masculine, without the smallest approach to being fulsome, and which might be PUBLICLY USEFUL as well as privately acceptable."

Now we do not complain of this as an absolute servility on the part of Mr. Jacob Jones, who seems to pride himself on his Toryism, but it is quite sufficient to indicate the species of mental prostration, which the Society, with its premiums and its pensions, is likely to foster. In point of fact, a Royal Society of Literature is a folly everywhere, but in England something worse. If we examine the higher productions of English intellect, how many shall we find that could never have exhibited the free breathings of mind by which they are at present distinguished, had they been produced under the influence of a Royal Society of Literature? Without adverting to direct and unequivocal opinions, passages must have been modified, lest this or that construction might have been put as their being offensive to power, and intellect would have danced in chains, as all intellect must do which bows down at such a shrine. In a word, we cannot discover a more injurious Institution in a free country, than a Royal Society as aforesaid, if absolutely effective and rich. As it is, the mischief is small, and the result—puerility.

Having spoken with no great degree of admiration of the "Fall of Constantinople," it is but fair to observe, that in some of the minor poems appended to it, Mr. Jones has evinced both poetry and pathos. We supply an example:—

ON THE SULIOTE WOMEN,

WHO, WHEN PURSUED TO THE VERGE OF A PRECIPICE, THREW THEIR CHILDREN DOWN
IT, TO SAVE THEM FROM BECOMING THE SLAVES OF THEIR OPPRESSORS, THE TURKS.

The Spartan's pass may live in song,
And freedom consecrate his shrine;
Let fame a nobler tale prolong,
And, woman! let that tale be thine!

Go! bid the Pasha haste, and see
A sight that angels weep to view;
Bid his red eyes roll savagely,
And, mothers! bid him gaze on you.

Your infants' shrieks arise to heav'n;
Their blood shall call its vengeance down;
Mercy shall pass him unforgiv'n,
And Pity greet him with a frown.

But hark! the crags are echoing round,
As on the furious foemen press;
"Woman"—it is the rallying sound;
Yet theirs will be a fierce caress.

See, on the precipice's height
The heroine-phalanx take their stand;
Theirs the gaunt she-wolf's cubless might;
Theirs the robb'd mother's desperate hand.

The sword is on them—firm, and free,
The Suliote-mother yields her breath;
Yes! such a mother smiles at thee,
Infuriate Death!

Yet, heroines! yet one struggle more,
One last, long grapple with the foe;
Your sucklings bid the wretch restore,
Down-tumbling to th' abyss below.

'Tis done! the vulture-feast is spread
O'er the red steeps, in grim array;
Go! bid the tyrant count his dead,
He ne'er shall carry them away.

Rejoice, rejoice, ye Suliote-brave!
"The Infant's steep"—your watchword wild;
'Twas there the Moslem found a grave,
The mother sacrific'd her child.

The Spartan's pass may live in song,
And freedom consecrate his shrine;
Let fame a nobler tale prolong,
And, woman! let that tale be thine!

We suspect that Mr. Jacob Jones is a very great original. Here we have notices of Dissertations on Homer, are favoured with poems on the Fall of Constantinople, and what not; and behold, in a note he informs us, that he is about to publish a pamphlet against the TREAD WHEEL Discipline—Prodigious!

Since writing the foregoing observations, we find that Mr. Jacob Jones, Jun. has cancelled his angry preface; and through the medium of a very suspicious person, one MODERATOR, the fact is announced in the JOHN BULL.—Worse and worse!

Sabæan Researches, by Mr. Landseer.

MR. LANDSEER has long been known as an eminent artist and antiquary, and upon several occasions has distinguished himself at the Royal and other Scientific Institutions of the metropolis by his Lectures on subjects connected with the Fine Arts: and it seems that the "*Sabæan Researches*," just published, have been embodied from a Course of Lectures recently delivered by him at the Royal Institution on the subject of certain Engraved Antiques of a very peculiar kind; which Mr. L. shows to have been the Sacred Signets of the most ancient Sabæan Nations, and their immediate successors. From the shapes of these gems—from the substances of which they are severally composed—from the subjects they each contain—and from other evidences, with which all are more or less replete, the date of each signet; the country to which it belonged; the rank of its possessor; and various other interesting consequences, are inferred with a discrimination, and by reasoning, calculated to convey a like impression to that which seems to have been received upon the mind of the author relative to each of the wonderful diversity of topics brought under examination.

In comments of this nature, it is usual to afford the world an opportunity of forming its own judgment, by introducing such extracts as appear to contain something like a sample of the work in question; but, in the present instance, it would hardly be possible, even were our limits more adequate, to break off one fragment from the whole that would show more than that it belonged to a fabric of very curiously unique workmanship; and that it could not appear away from the place whence it was taken, and where alone it was designed to be seen, without detriment to both itself and that of which it was a member. We shall, therefore, content ourselves with giving a little further *general* description of the book, and with pointing out a few of the *particular* advantages which it seems to us capable of conferring upon the arts and sciences, upon philology, and upon religion.

The Work is comprised in Eight Essays, each of which has its special tendency; forming altogether a quarto volume of considerable magnitude; and every treatise is illustrated with Engraved Specimens of certain cylindrical and other shaped Signets or Gems; or with some particular detail found represented on these venerable remains of ancient art. Each Essay is addressed to some individual who has signalized himself in pursuing or promoting scientific achievements; and the adoption of this epistolary style has enabled the author to communicate, in a familiar way, the discoveries he has made; and to argue questions that might, perhaps, have been otherwise dry and unpalatable to general readers, in the most intelligible and agreeable manner.

From what has been thus *generally* advanced, it might be supposed that inquiries concerning such antique relics as Arabia and Chaldea offer, could only interest the profound virtuoso; but from Mr. Landseer's "*Researches*" it will be found that the subjects of these Oriental monuments concern readers of every class above the mere triflers in fiction. It is, indeed, true, that the investigation mainly relates to an article which, from its outside appearance, few would think worth stooping for, and the intrinsic quality of which none, therefore, but a

well-versed antiquary could know how to appreciate. But from the following concise specification of those branches of knowledge which may more especially extract valuable accessions from the results afforded by the successful labours of Mr. L., it will be at once manifest, that the very shards of Old Saba, Babylon, &c. are able to teach us many acceptable facts as to the arts, the sciences, the religion, and the history of times to which written documents supply no clue.

The subjects found wrought upon these pieces of Sabæan sculpture appertain to such celestial objects as excited the most popular attention in those early ages and countries to which they severally belonged: and, such as have before sought in vain through the vague narratives of the primitive historians for some account of the earliest seat of systematic astronomy, will here find themselves agreeably and satisfactorily led within sight of the dawn of this now effulgent science. In adducing many of his evidences, and in deriving his dates, Mr. L. refers very much to that tardy recession of the fixed stars, and nutation of the poles, which, among other effects, causes what is termed *the precession of the equinoxes*, and which he has very appropriately and magnificently designated "The Great Century-Hand of Time." Concerning many of the constellations, and particularly those of Taurus, Aries, Boötes, Virgo, Cepheus, Cassiopeia, and the successive solstitial signs, some very interesting facts have been elicited from the symbolical representations contained in these very ancient works of art. In short, those best versed in astronomy and its early history, will find themselves rather surprised, after the lapse of so many centuries, to behold the sages of nations long since in oblivion, restored to light, and exhibited before their eyes, peopling, as it were, the starry firmament.

As forming the first rude efforts now known to be extant among the Arts of Design, the Gems of Babylon must possess an interest which none but the professed artist, or the amateur who has taken a philosophical view of the progress of these arts in all their branches, can duly appreciate: yet, from their venerable character, these miniature specimens of deified personifications, are subjects which every classic poet and mythologist must have some curiosity to become acquainted with; and more especially so from the unsophisticated originality with which they come stamped.

Though the author, in prosecuting these novel inquiries, does not enter much into topics of a religious nature, yet he has very expressly shown that the Sabæan Signets of which he treats, are "Graven Images" of that very kind, the worship of which is so strictly prohibited in the decalogue. It is also deducible from the course of arguments contained in the work, that the first emotion of religion in the mind of man, which is generally termed *natural* religion, was, in all probability, excited by the sublime display of the starry Heaven: and *revealed* religion is also indebted to the author of these "Researches" for the removal of a troublesome stumbling-block with which all the translations of the Scriptures have been hampered. No commentator has ever been able to give any satisfactory solution as to that species of idolatry denounced under the term "Grove-worship;" and this difficulty Mr. L. has clearly shown to have arisen from quite a mistaken sense of the Hebrew word, "*Ashre*;" the true signification of which he seems to have very effectually extracted; and he has also, in many

other places, evinced much discernment in sifting and rectifying etymological points. The sacred estimation in which the signets so frequently alluded to in Scripture were held, and the peculiar manner in which they were used in the ceremonies of religion and ratification of solemn compacts, is very fully explained: indeed, we may at once say, that the "Sabæan Researches" is a book that every bible-reader of an intelligent order may, with much advantage, consult.

Though the few foregoing observations may tend to show some of the main bearings in which this work is calculated to be conspicuously useful, yet it perhaps extends with equal application into other directions that relate to the early stages of the world. Indeed, the laborious task of exploring the secret contents of these Sabæan remains is manifest from a closely printed index which occupies many pages, and which will, no doubt, be esteemed a valuable appendage to a work so full of curious information, of which it may be considered an alphabetical analysis, well calculated to occasionally refresh the memory concerning any subject canvassed in the volume to which it is attached. The more insight any one may have previously had into the early history of mankind, the greater pleasure will he derive from the perusal of these "Essays:" and where but little knowledge on the subjects they embrace has been before acquired, they are calculated to convey much, and to create a thirst for more of a similar nature. In short, the detached traces which others had here and there marked of the early progress of Infant Science, Mr. L. has connected, and followed it up to its first stage, restoring and gilding its little footsteps through tracks where they had seemed totally and for ever obliterated.

COMMON PLACES.

LXXXIII.

In the late quarrel about Liberty, upwards of five millions of men have been killed, and *one king*.

LXXXIV.

The people (properly speaking) are not a herd of slaves just let loose, or else goaded on, like blind drudges, to execute the behests of their besotted task-masters; but the band of free citizens, taught to know their rights, and prepared to exercise them.

LXXXV.

The people are the slaves of ignorance and custom; the friends of the people are the dupes of reason and humanity. Power stops at nothing but its own purposes.

LXXXVI.

The Author of Waverly observes—"In truth, the Scottish peasantry are still infected with that rage for funeral ceremonial, which once distinguished the grandees of the kingdom so much, that a sumptuary law was made by the Parliament of Scotland for the purpose of restraining it; and I have known many in the lowest stations who have denied themselves not merely the comforts, but almost the necessities of life, in order to save such a sum of money as might enable their surviving friends to bury them like Christians, as they termed it; nor could their faithful executors be prevailed upon, though equally necessitous, to turn to the use and maintenance of the living the money

vainly wasted upon the interment of the dead.”—ANTIQUARY, vol. iv. p. 48.—If I were to attempt an explanation of the peculiar delight and pride which the Scotch are thus supposed to take in funeral ceremonies, I should say, that as inhabitants of wild and barren districts, they are more familiar with the face of nature than with the face of man; and easily turn to it as their place of rest and final home. There is little difference, in their imaginations, between treading the green mountain turf, and being laid beneath it. The world itself is but a living tomb to them. Their mode of subsistence is cold, hard, comfortless, bare of luxuries and of enjoyments, torpid, inured to privations and self-denial; and death seems to be its consummation and triumph, rather than its unwelcome end. Their life was a sort of struggle for a dreary existence; so that it relapses into the grave with joy and a feeling of exultation. The grey rock out of which their tomb is cut, is a citadel against all assaults of the flesh and the spirit; the kindred earth that wraps the weather-beaten, worn-out body, is a soft and warm resting-place from the hardships it has had to encounter. It is no wonder, therefore, that the Scotch prepare for the due celebration of this event with the foresight characteristic of them, and that their friends consign them to the earth with becoming fortitude and costly ceremony. “Man,” says Sir Thomas Brown, though in quite a different spirit, “man is a noble animal, splendid in ashes and pompous in the grave; solemnising nativities and deaths with equal lustre, nor omitting ceremonies of bravery, even in the infamy of his nature.”—See his URN-BURIAL.

LXXXVII.

In the HEART OF MID-LOTHIAN, vol. iv. p. 13, we meet with the following reflections:—“Perhaps one ought to be actually a Scotchman to conceive how ardently, under all distinctions of rank and situation, they feel their mutual connexion with each other as natives of the same country. There are, I believe, more associations common to the inhabitants of a rude and wild than of a well-cultivated and fertile country: their ancestors have more seldom changed their place of residence; their mutual recollection of remarkable objects is more accurate; the high and the low are more interested in each other’s welfare; the feelings of kindred and relationship are more widely extended; and, in a word, the bonds of patriotic affection, always honourable, even when a little too exclusively strained, have more influence on men’s feelings and actions.” Thus far our author, but without making much progress in the question he has started. “*Via*, Goodman Dull! thou hast spoken no word all this while”—I might say, but I do not choose to say so, to the GREAT UNKNOWN. There is an enumeration of particulars, slightly and collaterally connected with the subject, but as “*Douce David Deans*” would say, “they do not touch the root of the matter.” In fact, then, the mind more easily forms a strong and abstracted attachment to the soil (in which it was bred) in remote and barren regions, where few artificial objects or pursuits fritter away attention, or divert it from its devotion to the naked charms of nature—(perhaps the privations, dangers, and loneliness incident to such situations also enhance the value and deepen the interest we take in them)—and again, in a rude and scattered population, where there is a dearth and craving after general society, we

naturally become more closely and permanently attached to those few persons, with whom neighbourhood, or kindred, or a common cause, or similar habits or language, bring us into contact. Two Englishmen meeting in the wilds of Arabia would instantly become friends, though they had never seen one another before, from the want of all other society and sympathy. So it is in the ruder and earlier stages of civilization. This is what attaches the Highlander to his hill and to his clan. This is what attaches Scotchmen to their country and to one another. A Londoner, in his fondness for London, is distracted between the play-houses, the opera, the shops, the coffee-houses, the crowded streets, &c. An inhabitant of Edinburgh has none of these diversities to reconcile: he has but one idea in his head or in his mouth,—that of the CALTON-HILL; an idea which is easily embraced, and which he never quits his hold of, till something more substantial offers,—a situation as porter in a warehouse, or as pimp to a great man.

TABLE TALK, LITERARY INTELLIGENCE, &c.

It is pleasant to understand, that, prejudiced as are the French on the subject of their poetry and drama, they are beginning to yield a few points to the school of England. We quote the following pleasant passage from the London Magazine:—"A reaction has been produced on the literature of France by the genius of foreign poetry, and particularly by that of England. The strokes have been long, slow, and reiterated, but the impulse has been not the less powerful; and the barbarian literature has awakened by little and little the spirit of jealous imitation. It is amusing to observe the more intelligent and less prejudiced of their men of letters coquetting with Shakespear. The attempt, to be sure, resembles the trimming a noble cedar into the form of a peacock; but it is praiseworthy and politic. The mere contact must have done good. We who, with our national reverence of established abuses, patronise Tate's Frenchified alterations of Lear, have no right to be affronted with Ducis, that he has re-cast some of Shakespear's principal tragedies, and new-modelled the fable, manners, and characters, after the standard of his country's drama. On the contrary, we should allow his merit handsomely, and congratulate the Parisians on their language receiving a considerable infusion of the passion of Shakespear's scene. To be sure, narration, as might have been anticipated, is too much substituted for action, and the plays are so far undramatised. The philosophy of Shakespear is also misunderstood: the translator has fixed his eye chiefly on his poetry, which he is ambitious to correct—and on the progress of the action, which he is sensible teems with interest, but which he thinks he can improve in its unity, by making prominent characters and incidents that Shakespear has kept in the back-ground. But Shakespear's knowledge of scenic effect is too profound, and his calculations of results too accurate, to allow of his management of what is called the business of the tragedy being safely called in question. The unfortunate officiousness, also, in making out every thing plain, and leaving nothing to the guess of the imagination, betrays an ignorance of one of the master-secrets of dramatic illusion, which Shakespear possessed by a sort of

intuition. The design which the author had in view is thus misunderstood; and so much of the reality of life is subtracted from the scene. Another impediment to the introduction of Shakespear, in all his native strength, on the stage of France, is the necessity of the poet being always in the view of the audience, who desire to see all the springs of his machinery, as if a conjuror were to explain the method of his playing the cups and balls; and who expect to have an epic representation before them cast into scenes, the dialogue tagged with rich rhymes, and every thing, even to the gallery which leads to a Queen's bed-chamber, expressed *noblement*. Short natural expressions, or interrupted sentences, are too much in common life; every thing must "come mended from the tongue" of the player; and the most sudden thought, or most hurried ejaculation, must evince the poet's mastery over his metre, and his skill in elevating his phrase to the decorous height of faultless tragedy. It is needless to point out how much of Shakespear's truth of imitation is sacrificed in this mechanical and unnatural process of accommodation."

LEGACY HUNTING.—We borrow the following from an Essay so headed in the New Monthly Magazine:—"Jacob's 'Jew's trick' upon his brother is a type of modern Hebraical dealings in the *post obit* line, and the model of that species of legacy-hunting in which Mother Church in her younger days was a perfect Nimrod. The passion of churchmen for legacies is of so violent a nature, that no English Parliament was ever strong enough to contend with it, or cunning enough to draw up a statute of mortmain, through the meshes of which the church could not slip. It must be owned that their "*adveniente mundi vespero*" was a capital hit in this line; and the getting men to part with their property, under the notion that all property was about to be instantly destroyed, without causing their own rapacity to bring the plea into suspicion, was a *tour de force* which shames the *droit d'Aubaine* of old France, and throws all regal and imperial schemes of legacy-hunting to an immeasurable distance. This remnant, however, of the good old times, as well as the savage method of doing business, is gone by. Although, therefore, the Holy Alliance may succeed in restoring the church to its old possessions, it is not probable that all the committee of right-lined extinguishers, with all their ribbons and baronies to boot, could persuade the bulls and bears of 'Change-alley to give a Benjamin's share of their loans and debentures to the parsons."

The Parisian Censor will not allow Voltaire's tragedy of Mahomet to be performed at Paris, whether from a sympathy with religious imposture generally, or out of enmity to Voltaire, we know not. The first *may* be the reason, because it was not allowed to be played without great opposition on the part of the clergy in the first instance. In a perusal of the French Mahomet, no indifferent person will discover any occasion for this prohibition; but High Priests and Pharisees have a sort of sixth sense on these occasions, and are aware of the influence of an association of ideas. Mahomet has, however, been recently performed at Brussels, where Talma assumed the principal character; which has led the Parisian wits to observe, that the old saying is fulfilled: Talma is not allowed to be *a prophet in his own country*.

"A King may make a Noble but not a Gentleman," said one of the Kings of France. How gratifying, therefore, to the great body of the French people must be the discoveries of their President D'Hozier, who has just published in Paris the first volume of a book intitled *L'Indicateur Nobiliare*, containing the proper names of more than 15,000 families, whose Nobility, the worthy President observes, is incontestably established. Nor is this all: The list is so far from being complete, that this French Nugent Bell invites individuals who are not included in his first volume, to furnish him with copies of their titles, &c. in order that their names may be inserted in a second. Adverting to our commencing observation, this body forms what answers to the ancient Gentry of England, or more properly still, the Nobility and Gentry collectively, as the French Peerage, under the old regime, was confined to ten or twelve individuals, whose duties were any thing but legislative. According to the old way of thinking, no member of these 15,000 families can meddle with trade, or, without losing *caste*, condescend to be useful otherwise than in the army, the officering of which they have been in the habit of claiming as their almost exclusive privilege. Attending to the set of the counter-revolutionary current in France, the restoration of this mass to their pristine self-importance and public inutility seems to be a favourite point of Bourbon policy; and hence the publication of M. D'Hozier. It is scarcely possible to imagine a species of revival more nationally silly or socially injurious, than that of a vast body of small-propertyed people, who are to be abstracted from every idea of increasing it, except at the public expence, and by the engrossment of offices and emoluments, which, for the general benefit, should be open to all. If the French Chamber of Peers is ever to be any thing at all, it is evident that the minor *Noblesse*, who are not Peers, should amalgamate with the great body of the people, and not present the absurd spectacle of a privileged race, increasing geometrically to the no-substantial benefit of themselves and to the injury of every one else. We all know what the mass of these people were during the reign of Louis XV. and what they effected both for themselves and their country; and nothing is more obvious than that, together with the Priesthood, they are every way disposed to run the same race over again.

Professor Schlegel of Bonn has issued proposals, in Germany, England, and France, for a translation, and publication by subscription, of the Sanscrit poem of *Rama-yana*, or the exploits of Ramas. This, with the *Maha Bharata*, occupies the first rank among the poems which the Indians call *Puranas*, or ancient traditions. The fictions which it contains are spread not only over the whole extent of India, properly so called, but they have also penetrated into the Peninsula beyond the Ganges, into the islands of the Indian Archipelago, and into several countries of central Asia. The subject is the banishment of Ramas, a Prince descended from the Kings of Oude; his wanderings through the Peninsula; the carrying off his wife by a giant, the King of Ceylon; the miraculous conquest of that island; and the restoration of Ramas to the throne of his forefathers. The length of the *Rama-yana* is not excessive; being estimated at 24,000 distichs, which are contained in seven books.

THE earliest morning perambulation in the streets of London used to be that of the market gardeners; but we learn that, for some time past, the precedence is due to ice-carts. Ice for the confectioners, thanks to the enterprise of a speculative individual, is now furnished from Norway; and the imported ice, in avoidance of sun-shine, is borne in carts very early in the morning, from the wharfs below London-bridge, to the various ice repositories all over the town.

In the history of the *Jardin des Plantes* at Paris, the following statement of the amount of the Animal Kingdom, as at present known, is given as tolerably accurate:—Quadrupeds, or mammiferous land animals, above 500; birds, about 5000; reptiles, 600; fishes, 300; molluscuous animals and shells, 8000; insects, about 25,000; vermes, properly so called, zoophytical animals, &c. 4000. The whole shewing an increase in the amount of zoological objects, from 6137 species to at least 46,100 species in less than fifty years.

STANZAS TO A FLY THAT HAD SURVIVED THE WINTER
OF 1822.

Welcome! poor solitary thing!
 Dreary St. Leon of thy tiny race!
 Thine is the only feeble wing
 Of all the swarms that buzzed about the place.
 Seek'st thou thy glossy friends, or near relations,
 That thus thou shun'st thy erewhile avocations?

No longer gentle music making,
 Nor sporting freakishly about the room;
 No longer all our food partaking,
 Nor shunning skilfully the destined doom;
 No longer daring every hostile finger
 That strove to punish thee when thou didst linger.

Thou deem'st us *now* no more thy foes;
 The "hey-day of the blood" with thee is past;
 In sooth thou judg'st us right; thy woes
 Though *flighty*, claim our pity;—thou'rt the last
 The old, sad, solitary Desolation—
 Last of a kindred! without one relation!

Familiar art thou now, nor vain,
 And claim'st incongruous fellowship with me;
 No link is left in the long chain
 Of huge creation between us and thee:
 The thousand clans of entomology
 Have left thee, making no apology.

Who hast thou now but us t'admire
 The sober beauty of thy downy back?
 What eyes but our's (thy hundred we require)
 To view thy wonders:—then thy knack
 Of walking all along upon the ceiling!
 Or canvassing a wine-glass without *reeling*!

Will thy slight tiny form endure
 (To thee an awful cycle!) one whole year?
 No ambuscading spider's lure
 'Tis true can now destroy thee; but I fear
 The savage frosts, that murder pretty flowers,
 Will not disdain to crush *thy* feeble powers.

If thou *should'st* live till July's sun
 Shall call thy legion genus to their game

THE LITERARY EXAMINER.

Of merry life,—what wondrous fun
 Thy Christmas tales will cause! Then what a *name*
 Thou'lt have!—a venerable Captain Parry,
 Whose winter enterprise did *not* miscarry!

What dread accounts of cold long nights!
 How to the chimney-corner thou did'st creep;
 And, as the warmth retired, the heights
 Of window-curtain folds thou scal'dst, to sleep,
 And wait with limbs benumb'd the lazy dawning
 Of household Phœbus, every dismal morning!

When too the evening hastened on,
 And mimic summer cheer'd thy little frame;
 Thou mayst recount how, one by one,
 Thou visited'st us all in happy game—
 Fanning, in seeming fondness, all our faces,
 Or traversing our hands to show thy paces,
 Or choosing saucily the choicest places.

Then supper-time! what *summer* fly
 Could *half* the glories fancy of that feast!
 A Christmas supper! How thou'lt ply
 Thy gastric erudition! and at *least*
 Wilt prove, beyond appeal, thy reputation
 As ultra gourmand of the Flighty Nation.

When thus thou'lt talk of Christmas sweets,
 How will the listening epicures exclaim!
 And vow they envy thee thy winter feats;
 For to be so regaled they'd brave the same:
 Here apricots in floating ambiguity,—
 There pine-apples in luscious perspicuity!

The wonders of a medlar will
 Engage each subtle, disputations fly:
 But *thou* alone wilt boast the skill
 To solve the mysteries of a rich mince-pie!
 And a Twelfth-cake, endorsed with hieroglyphic,
 Will stamp thee eminently scientific!

The cold and mystic misletoe, whose gloom
 Seems antidotal to its merry use,
 Thou hast explored; the snowy cheerful bloom
 Of lauristinus; and the boughs profuse
 Of vig'rous holly, with its coral lading,
 Thou'st seen for weeks, despising summer fading.

Poor solitary thing, farewell!
 Tomorrow's dawn perhaps may see thy form
 In frosted death:—thy little knell
 Shall not be heard! How many in the storm
 Of life are wreck'd, and no bell kindly ringing
 Informs survivors who to life are clinging!

I. J. T.—*Standerwick.*

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